



The Basics

Choose a professional style and color. Darker colors project a more professional image. Black, navy or federal blue and charcoal gray are excellent choices. Pinstripe gray, some greens and other shades of gray also are good choices. Image consultants differ in opinion on wearing red or yellow at business functions; often the shade is the key to acceptability.

Suits without a blouse underneath are acceptable. Just be careful about cleavage and any room temperature changes during the day. The skirt should hit at or around the knee. Pants suits are acceptable for most offices.

When buying suits, the best quality fabric is wool. Even for spring/summer suits. Look for wool gabardine. The bad news is that wool suits are more expensive and harder to find. With fabric advances, synthetic fibers like viscose (rayon) and microfiber are also good choices.



Accessory Tips

No jewelry is acceptable but some jewelry is encouraged. Minimize on accessories. Stick to one set of earring. One necklace is best but two are acceptable. More than two is too much. Stud earrings have a more polished image. Single drop earrings are acceptable for the office. Chandelier earrings are not business casual or professional attire.

Clear nail polish and French manicures are the most professional manicure options.

Choose low heeled shoes but not flats. You need some heel for a smooth gait. Pumps are universally stylish. Choose one with a height of 1.5 to 2 inches. Have at least two pairs, one black and one navy blue.

Go easy on perfume. Never wear more than one fragrance, including scented deodorant or scented lotion. Two to three squirts are sufficient. As one fashion editor put it, "Too much perfume is just as offensive as bad body odor."



Hair Styles

The best hair styles are ones that communicate poise and control. Experts suggest hair pulled back has a more polished appearance. In general, hair styles should be uncomplicated.

Never!

- ❖ uncontrolled hair
- ❖ objects embedded in hair
- ❖ unusual and unnatural hair colors

Casual Business



Never!

- | | |
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| ❖ headgear (unless religious headwear) | ❖ baggy clothes |
| ❖ nose and eyebrow rings | ❖ middrifts exposing belly buttons |
| ❖ tongue piercing | ❖ tank tops or plunging necklines |
| ❖ denim or sweatshirts | ❖ flip flops or sandals |
| ❖ t-shirts that advertise products or behavior | ❖ low ride jeans. |

Golf shirts or polo shirts are acceptable. Chinos and khakis are great choices. Cover tattoos as best possible. Some women have tried body paint on their leg tattoos so that the area blends in under pantyhose. Concealer and stage makeup are options to coverup tattoos.

How to Dress for Success



Victoria Pilate, Ph.D.
Author of *Dorm Rooms to Boardrooms* and the upcoming
book *Svelte*